

## What is West Nile virus?

West Nile virus is a mosquito-borne virus (flavivirus) first found in the United States during the summer of 1999 as a cause of illness in New York City. It is commonly found in West Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

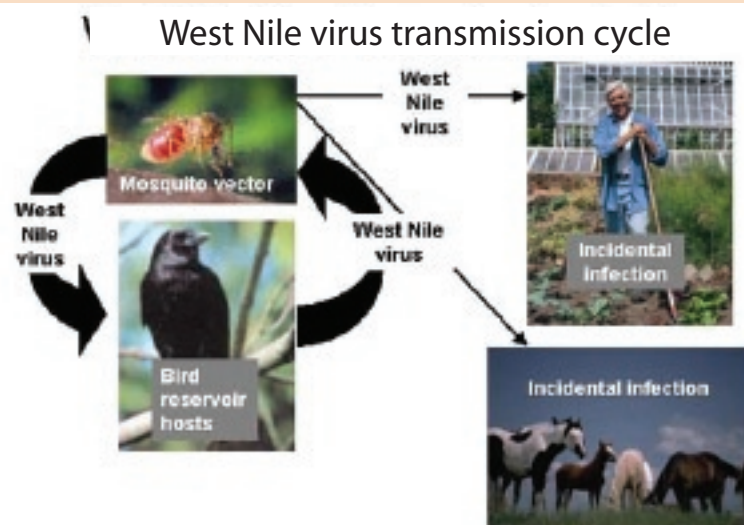
The virus can infect people, certain types of birds, mosquitoes, horses and other animals. Less than 1% of mosquitoes carry the virus.



## How is it spread?

West Nile virus is spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds. After 10 to 14 days the infected mosquito can then transmit West Nile virus to people and animals while seeking a meal.

The virus is located in the mosquito's salivary glands. When the mosquito bites, the virus may be injected into the animal or person, and cause illness.



**West Nile virus is *not* spread by person-to-person contact, bird-to-person or horse-to-person contact**

## How can I protect my family from West Nile virus?

***It's easy to reduce the risk of West Nile virus.***

**From April to October, when mosquitoes are most active, take the following safety measures:**

### Prevent mosquito bites by

- Avoid being outdoors at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active.
- Wear long pants, loose-fitting long sleeved shirts and socks when you are going into wetlands or woods.
- Consider using an insect repellent containing *DEET* (N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide).
- ***Apply DEET according to manufacturer's directions printed on the label.***
- Spraying clothing with repellents containing DEET is effective in preventing mosquitoes from biting through clothing. If you spray your clothing you do not need to spray your skin under your clothing.
- Avoid spraying repellent over wounds, cuts, or irritated skin.
- Do not allow children to apply repellents themselves.
- Place mosquito netting over infant carriers when outdoors.
- Pregnant women should avoid exposure to repellents.

***Don't give mosquitoes a chance.***

**Mosquitoes lay their eggs in slow-moving or standing water. They live in reeds, tall grass and bushes.**

### Control mosquito breeding by:

- Empty water twice a week from pet food and water dishes, animal troughs, flower pots, buckets, barrels, birdbaths, or similar water-holding containers.
- Remove discarded tires, tin cans and plastic containers.
- Check for containers in the trash, storage places, and other areas that may be hard to see.
- Clean clogged gutters in the spring and fall; make sure they drain properly.
- Turn over wheelbarrows and plastic wading pools when not in use.
- Eliminate any standing water that collects on your property.
- Fix leaky outdoor faucets and sprinklers.
- Make sure doors and windows are "bug tight."

## What are the symptoms?

Most people infected with West Nile virus have no symptoms, or mild symptoms that include fever, fatigue, headache, and muscle or joint pain.

Less than 1% of infected people will develop a more serious illness. Signs of severe infection include headache, high fever, stiff neck, disorientation, convulsions, tremors, muscle weakness, paralysis and coma. The time of incubation from bite to symptoms is 3 to 15 days.



## How is it treated?

There is no specific treatment for West Nile virus infection.

In more serious cases, treatment includes intensive supportive therapy involving hospitalization, use of intravenous fluids and nutrition, respiratory support, prevention of secondary infections, and good nursing care.



## What can be done to prevent infection?

Currently there is no vaccine for West Nile virus. Prevention and control measures found to be effective are bite prevention, monitoring activities and mosquito control.



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# management

## Preventing and Controlling West Nile Virus

MOSQUITO CONTROL DISTRICT



### What Clark County is doing to reduce the risk of West Nile virus

Working with the Clark County Health Department, the Mosquito Control District has developed a comprehensive West Nile Response plan that includes public education, habitat reduction, mosquito surveillance and control activities.

#### *What you can do to help*

The Clark County Health Department and Mosquito Control District would like your help in monitoring for dead birds, especially crows and jays as they are most sensitive to West Nile virus.

#### **Use the following guidelines when collecting dead birds:**

- Only collect birds dead fewer than 24 hours and not damaged.
- Use rubber gloves when picking up dead birds.  
If you do not have gloves, use a plastic bag over your hands.
- Place the bird inside a plastic bag, tie shut or close, and place inside a second bag.
- Place a note in the second (outer) bag with the name, address, and phone number of the person collecting the bird, then close the second bag.
- Call the Clark County Mosquito Control 24-hour hotline at: (360) 397-8430.

For more information:

[www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm)

[www.doh.wa.gov/wnv](http://www.doh.wa.gov/wnv)

[www.clark.wa.gov/mosquito](http://www.clark.wa.gov/mosquito)

# surveillance

# prevention

# protection